

ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES AT WARWICK LIBRARY

BY LIBRARY STUDENT PARTNER,
EDWARD STANBURY



Library Student Partner, Edward Stanbury, takes a look at some of the accessibility services available for students with disabilities and specific learning differences at the Library. **If you want to know about all the accessibility support the Library has to offer, well then... Read on!**

What is considered a disability?

"You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities." (Gov.UK, 2010).

What is a specific learning difference?

If you have difficulties with one or more certain parts of learning, then you have a specific learning difference (SpLDs). This can be in areas such as processing speed, auditory short term/working memory and/or with visual/auditory perception. Examples of common SpLDs include Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and ADHD.



Accessible and Sensory Study Rooms

Accessible study rooms are an oasis of automatic doors, adjustable tables and chairs, whiteboards, and a suite of accessible study software like "Essay Writer". The slightly different sensory study rooms have dimmable lighting, LED lighting and, depending on the room, these have a wobble cushion, yoga mat and galaxy projector. There is an accessible room on every floor of the library, one in the University House Learning Grid 2, and one in the PG hub for postgraduates. They are all bookable on the [library website](#). Worth noting though, that you need be registered with [Disability Services](#) to use one of these rooms.

Assistive Technology Area

If you would prefer to work somewhere a little more open, the assistive technology area on Floor 1 is the place to be: most, if

not all the software you will find in the accessible study room computers is there, including "Audio NoteTaker" and "ClaroRead".

Some people like to use olfactory stimulus, like lavender to relax during study...

Accessible Software

We have touched on the assistive software packages, but here is a summary of some of the programs we have:

- Reading and writing software, Read&Write and ClaroRead, offer text to speech functions, read aloud digital text, built in literacy tools and more!
- Note-taking software, Audio Notetaker does what it says on the tin.
- Scanning software, Kurzweil 1000 and Read&Write, that converts printed

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documents into accessible digital texts, and creates accessible and editable text out of pdfs or image text (what a god send!).

- Mind mapping softwares like Mindjet Mindmanager, Inspiration and Essay Writer
- For screen personalisation, check out Colorveil, Read&Write (it does everything, doesn't it?), AT bar, and OpenDyslexic.
- Screen reading software, ZoomText, Jaws, NVDA, allows text and computer functions to be read aloud, or to magnify the screen and icons like the cursor, or change colour contrasts on screen.
- Rest break software, Workrave, supports recovery and prevents strain injuries, alerts you to take micro pauses and rest breaks, and restricts you to your daily computer limit.

A lot to take in, but also a testament to the range of software on hand to help you when you visit the Library!

If you would like more information on Library software, please visit the "[Assistive Software](#)" information page on the library website.



Productivity Tools

While assistive software can be crucial to maintaining work productivity, there are some recommended apps/software packages on the Library website for productivity.

Some tech genius at the Library has created a filter. So, if you would like to search for productivity tools, please visit the "[Productivity Tools](#)" section of our website, where you can filter by software and operating system.

Loanable Equipment

You will find some of these in the accessible study rooms, but you can borrow it for use in the Library too. Here are the four groups:

- Magnifiers (handheld or a video magnifier)

- Hardware (accessible keyboards, assistive laptop, and a height adjustable multifunctional printer - very fancy!)
- Audio support (ear defenders and a portable induction loop)
- Reading and writing support (we are talking about reading rulers, page overlays, coloured printing paper, book rests and writing slopes, of course!)

If you want any of these items, speak to the lovely staff on the Helpdesk on Floor 1 of the Library.

Our Library has an amazing Accessibility Officer, Jane Dashwood

Sensory Refresh

The Library can help you set up a sensory study environment at home with events like [Sensory Refresh](#). Please look out for events like this on the [Library website](#) and on their [Instagram](#) page if you want to experiment with olfactory (smell), tactile (touch), and other sensory stimuli!

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Some people like to use olfactory stimulus, like lavender to relax during study, and peppermint to stimulate brain activity.



Other Sensory Events

The Library is also creating other sensory events for all students. These include Sensory Crafts, which is an event where students can create sensory items in a sensory environment, and [Sensory Workspace](#) which is a [Write Here Write Now](#) inspired event whereby they provide a sensory environment for students to use to study in whilst using the pomodoro technique.

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Support

Our Library has an amazing Accessibility Officer, Jane Dashwood, whose job is to

constantly evolve and expand the disability support services available at Warwick. Here are a couple things that her and the team are doing:

- Organising awareness events
- Increasing accessible/sensory study room provision
- 1-2-1 initiatives for people with disabilities to gain extra support and advice
- And ordering books to raise awareness for disabilities

The key takeaway is that if you have a disability, there is a suite of support available to you and a bunch of people that will listen and act on requests. Even if you don't have a disability, it's great to be aware of issues surrounding accessibility. Also, can we take a moment to appreciate that using sensory tools to enhance studying is so underrated - come along to Sensory Refresh and our other Library workshops to explore this further.